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Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation

PROVINCE SUPPORTS STRONG FIRST NATIONS GOVERNANCE

VICTORIA – The Province is providing $300,000 to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) to help First Nations build strong government in Aboriginal communities and foster mutually beneficial collaboration with their municipal neighbours, Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation Minister Michael de Jong announced today.

"Faced with similar challenges to provide services for their citizens, First Nations and municipalities across B.C. are working together in the spirit of a new relationship. The Province is supporting these successful partnerships because they result in better relations between communities and help First Nations to benefit from the experience of municipal governments," said de Jong. "These funds will help First Nations build self-reliance and become integrated participants in their regional economies."

First Nations and their municipal partners will determine the kind of project that meets their needs and apply to the UBCM for funding. Projects will help build close links between Aboriginal communities and municipalities in a variety of areas, including provision of joint services, mentoring to develop job skills, and information exchange to support program delivery. All First Nations and their municipal partners are eligible to apply.

"UBCM is very appreciative of the continuing support shown by the Province of B.C. for relationship-building between First Nations and local governments," said UBCM president Susan Gimse. "This new funding will expand the range of ways in which local governments and First Nations work together to improve the delivery of services in their communities."

Since 2005, the Province has been building a new relationship with First Nations based on respect, recognition and reconciliation. Through treaties and other agreements with First Nations, the Province is committed to closing the socio-economic gap that separates Aboriginal people from other British Columbians.

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